

INTELLIGENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

CODIAC-D-8  
2 July 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: IAC Committee on Documentation

SUBJECT : CIA Testimony Before Senator Humphrey's Committee  
on Senate Bill 3126.

The attached statement is circulated for your information  
pursuant to the CODIAC discussion on this subject (par. 8 b., CODIAC-M-2,  
6 June 1958).

  
Secretary

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Attachment  
As stated above.

COFIAC-D-8

Testimony Presented on 26 June 1958 by Paul A. Borel, Assistant Director for Central Reference, Central Intelligence Agency, before the Subcommittee on Reorganization of the Senate Committee on Government Operations in Reference to the Section on Scientific and Technical Information of Senate Bill 3126.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee:

As Mr. Allen Dulles has stated in his response to the Chairman's invitation, we subscribe wholeheartedly to efforts being made to strengthen the scientific information program of the Government. Your Committee is performing a singular service in bringing together the extensive data required for study and which can serve as a basis for constructive action in this important field.

Inasmuch as the Bill before you proposes actions which would affect our Agency only indirectly, my comments will be both general and brief.

The Central Intelligence Agency is authorized and directed to perform certain services for the government generally, and some specifically for the benefit of the other intelligence agencies. One of these services is to exploit foreign language publications and to disseminate to the government the resulting products - in this case mainly translations and related reference aids. The trans-lation of scientific and technical material constitutes an important part of this program. We are not authorized to do this for the public and do not have facilities for so doing.

The services of the Central Intelligence Agency in the field of foreign language document exploitation are provided as a service of

common concern to the intelligence community. Our translation work is geared directly to requirements provided by one or more agencies in this community. The unclassified translation output in the field of science and technology is now being produced at a rate of 30,000 English language pages per year. In addition to the utilization of this material by the intelligence agencies, CIA early recognized that a bonus effect could be achieved by providing this material through an appropriate outlet to the American public. Accordingly, early in 1954, we worked out arrangements to make translations available to the Library of Congress. This arrangement continued until January 1957 when the National Science Foundation asked us thereafter to forward our translations to NSF for on-forwarding to the John Crerar Library Translation Center.

The bonus effect, to which I referred above, turns out to be two-fold in nature: First, it results in increased assistance to intelligence from the scientific community of the United States in interpreting the significance of foreign scientific development; and secondly, it provides to the scientists of the United States who are not linguists access to the foreign literature in a form useable by them.

Currently, translations and foreign language aids are also made available to various government agencies who have responsibility for programs conducted on behalf of the public; e.g., the Office of Technical Services of the Department of Commerce receives all of our unclassified scientific and technical reports.

In discharging other responsibilities, we have coped with problems inherent in processing information as well as those related to coordinating

the activities of the intelligence community in the field of documentation. We, therefore, are well aware of the difficulty and complexity of giving adequate information service to a user.

In view of the divergence of opinions presented to your Committee earlier, I am prompted to conclude with two general observations. These are based on our experience as an Agency having coordinating responsibility in the field of intelligence information.

(1) An information system is an integral part of the organization it is designed to support. In our experience, an information service is a support function and organizationally must be so located to its user activity as to be immediately responsive to that user's need. Otherwise, the information service will, over a period of time, tend to employ its assets as it thinks best. And this may be considerably at variance with what is in fact needed.

(2) There are limits to the development of compatibility between information systems serving different users.

This generalization is a corollary of the preceding one. In our endeavors to facilitate the exchange of information among our colleagues in the intelligence community, we have as an objective, in the interest of efficiency, the development of compatible systems for processing information. This is an objective worthy of pursuit, but steps to standardize practices and systems should be taken cautiously, particularly when commitment to a given system involves the expenditure of large sums for

machines and the training of personnel. This point is particularly important now because many see their salvation in the immediate mechanization of information processing operations presently performed manually. Hence a caveat: we know of no single machine system which today is demonstrably so superior as to justify its adoption to achieve wholesale standardization.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee,   
Acting Chief of our Foreign Documents Division, is here with me.  
We will be pleased to answer such questions as we can.

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